1/85

PATHWAY TO GOD

आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः

A Quarterly Journal
of Spiritual Life

ACADEMY OF COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION, BELGAUM.

Pathway to God

(A quarterly Journal of Spiritual Life)

" One God, One World, One Humanity "

Editor : Prof. **D. G. Deshpande**

Vol XIX **January 1985** **No. 2**

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PATHWAY TO GOD

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" One God, One World, One Humanity."

Vol. XIX **January 1985** **No. 2**

PRAYER

नागेन्द्रहाराय त्रिलोचनाय
भस्माङ्गरागाय महेश्वराय ।
नित्यायशुद्धाय दिगम्बराय
तस्मै ' न ' काराय नमःशिवाय ॥

I Salute Shankara,
Who is having Cobra as a necklace,
Who is having three eyes,
Whose body is Smeared with ashes,
Who is called Maheshwara,
Who is pure and free from worldly pursuits,
Who is stark naked and
Who is 'न' कारस्वरुप.

शिवपञ्चाक्षरस्तोत्रम्.

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Shri Gurudeo Dr. R. D. Ranade

Born :
JAMKHANDI
3-7-1886

Samadhi :
NIMBAL
6-6-1957

Editorial Notes

Passing away of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Wednesday, 31st October 1984 was a fateful day for India. Two assassins, Sub-Inspector Beant Singh and Constable Satwant Singh opened fire from their arms and shot dead Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, at her residence. It is tragic that persons who were entrusted with the duty of protecting the Prime Minister did the ghastly act of assassinating her. This will be noted down as a great act of treachery in the political history of our country.

Indira Gandhi was a great lady. The nation was shocked to hear about the assassination of the Prime Minister. She was loved and respected not only in our country but all over the world. She was very able and with great devotion attended to her duties as Prime Minister. In that capacity, she was shouldering almost the entire burden of the administration of our country since 1966. She made all efforts for the uplift of the poor and downtrodden. She spared no pains for the all round progress and advancement of the country.

The assassination of Indiraji is the result of " Operation Blue Star " which she ordered in Punjab, to preserve the unity and integrity of our country. This painful decision had to be taken, as there was no other alternative before the Prime Minister. Extremists had played havoc in Punjab. Murders, loot and arson were rampant. This had to be put down. Law and order was required to be maintained. This challenge was met by the Prime Minister by ordering " Operation Blue Star. " She gave up her life for the cause of the country, she loved. She has earned a place in the hearts of our countrymen by her sacrifice.

Let us pay tribute to the departed soul of the Prime Minister by doing everything that will strengthen the bonds of love, affection and brotherhood among different communities, for this will ensure the unity and integrity of our motherland.

The VI World Sanskrit Conference :

The VI world Sanskrit Conference was held at Pennsylvania University, Philadelphia (U.S.A.) from 13th to 20th October 1984. About 300 delegates from 17 nations attended the Conference.

The inaugural address was delivered by Dr. R. N. Dandekar of Poona who is the President of the International Association for Sanskrit Studies. Symposiums were arranged on 'Analysis of Literary Forms,' 'Ancient and Modern Sanskrit,' 'New Materials-New Projects.' 'Vedic Studies' as well as 'Ancient and Modern Sanskrit,' Research Papers were presented in various sections. The Sanskrit Film 'Adi Shankaracharya' was screened for the delegates.

Dr. B. R. Modak, Professor and Head, Department of Sanskrit, Karnatak University, Dharwad participated in the Conference. He presented a paper on 'Mystic Connotation of the Veda.' After the Conference was over, he visited the University of San Diego and discussed some difficult questions relating to Madhusudana Sarasvati's "**Bhakti Rasayanam.**" He delivered a lecture on 'Philosophy and Yoga' in the Harvard University, Cambridge (U.S.A.). He participated in the class discussion on 'Vedic Ritual' in the Pennsylvania University.

On his way back, Dr. Modak visited the School of Oriental and African Studies in London University. He visited the Oxford University also to observe the Sanskrit Studies therein.

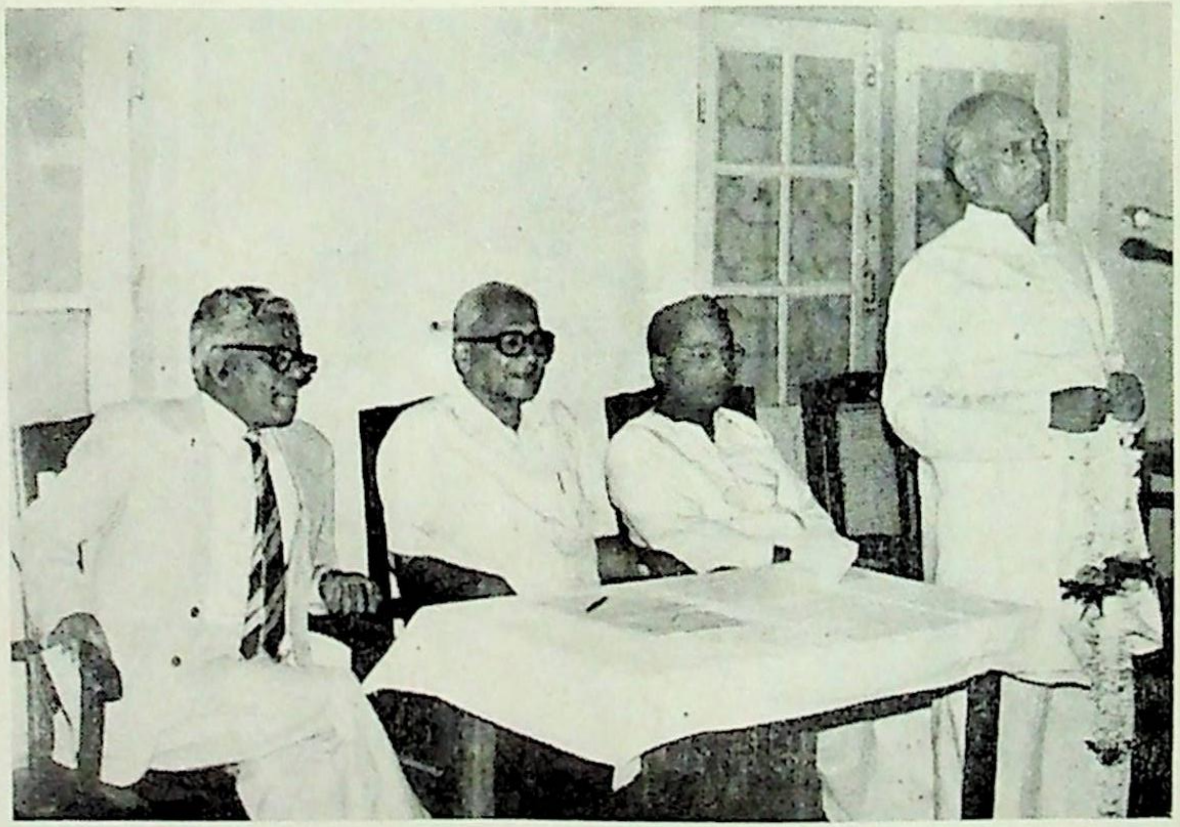
Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad :

The Belgaum Unit of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad held its First District Level Student's Convention in Gurudeo Mandir, Belgaum for one day on 2-12-1984. It was inaugurated by Shri. G. G. Chitnis, a well-known Industrialist of Belgaum. Dr. K. S. Vishwanath, Principal Gogte Institute of Technology and Shri Govindanji participated in the Convention.

Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad is a Nationwide Organisation of Teachers-Students and Educationalists of India. It is inspiring the students in the National Reconstruction and Educational change and also it is a platform for the

Inauguration of Gurudeo Ranade Memorial Lectures.

Gurudeo Mandir. 13-10-1984



From left to right : **1) Shri. A. D'souza, 2) Prof. D. G. Deshpande, 3) Dr. S. P. Dubey, 4) Shri. D. B. Parulekar.**

students to express their personalities in the development of our country in Knowledge, Character and Unity.

Both boys and girls participated in the Convention. Nine rank students were felicitated in the function. Shri Govindanji, M.Sc. South Zone Organising Secretary of the Parishad, spoke on the topic "Challenges Before The Youth." It was discussed in the light of the coming "International Youth Year, 1985."

* *

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1984 ವಜ್ರ ಮಹೋತ್ಸವ ವರ್ಷ
ಕರ್ಣಾಟಕ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕಿನ ಡೈಮಂಡ್ ಜ್ಯುಬಿಲಿ

ಕ್ಯಾಶ್ ಸರ್ಟಿಫಿಕೇಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನೀವು 3,379 ರೂಪಾಯಿಯನ್ನು ತೊಡಗಿಸಿದರೆ ಅದು ಹತ್ತು ವರ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ 10,000/- ರೂಪಾಯಿಗಳಾಗುವುದು.

ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಹತ್ತಿರದ ನಮ್ಮ ಶಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಚಾರಿಸಿರಿ.
250 ಕ್ಕೂ ಮಿಕ್ಕಿ ಶಾಖೆಗಳು ನಿಮ್ಮ ಸೇವೆಯಲ್ಲಿ.

ಜನ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯರ ಸೇವೆಯಲ್ಲಿ
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"Even if I die in the service of nation, I would be proud of it. Every drop of my blood, I am sure, will contribute to the growth of this nation and to make it strong and dynamic."

October 30, 1984 — *Smt. Indira Gandhi*

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The Hindu View of Suffering.

Dr. S. R. Talghatti,
Deptt. of Philosophy; University of Poona

The Hindu thought, philosophical and religious, starts with the fact of human suffering. The one problem to the solution of which it owes its entire existence, is the problem of suffering or misery. The problem is simple-how to get rid of misery. To put in Dale Carnegie's words, it is 'how to stop worrying and start living ? ' This is the negative formulation. The positive formulation would be ' how to be happy though human ? ' I have added the phrase ' though human ' because human beings are seen to be condemned to suffer. Perhaps other beings are also the victims. Hindu thinkers do include all sentient beings in the world of sufferers. The word they use is *Bhūtamātra*. Hence they make *Samatva* applicable to all the living beings. ' Mokṣa ', ' Nirvāṇa ', ' Kaivalya ' etc. are the words used by the Indian thinkers including the Hindus, Jains and Bauddhas, for that state of being where suffering is entirely absent. Whether it stands for a state of positive bliss also is a matter of dispute, for example between the Sāmkhya and the Advaita Vedānta thinkers. I may only comment on this issue that man is never satisfied with negatives; being is positive. So, it is more desirable to have a positive content to what is said to be the ultimate goal of life viz. Mokṣa.

Now, it is the basic principle of warfare that one must know the nature, strength and weakness of the enemy for being able to launch a successful attack on it, or even for a successful defence for that matter. If ' suffering ' is our enemy, we must know its nature and causes. Contemporary Indian Philosophers, at least the analysts of them, are bound to undertake a rigourous analysis of the *concept* of suffering, and for them, perhaps, that is all that is expected of a philosopher in connection with 'Suffering.' Fortunately, the classical Hindu thinkers did not have such a narrow conception of philosophy as this. Philosophy, for them, was a powerful weapon along with Religion, to fight out the 'real' problems of life, and not just linguistic ones. And there is no other problem as vitally important and of universal human concern as that of the problem of suffering. Hence, the Hindu thinkers dedicate philosophy, and also religion, to a 'suffering-free' – 'mukta' life; *Duhkhatrayabhighātāt Jijnāsā* (दुःखत्रयाभिघातात् जिज्ञासा)[1]

The word used for 'Suffering' is *duhkha* which is also translated as 'misery.' The opposite of it is *Sukha.* There are other terms like *Santosa* Amṛta, *Samādhāna,* Ānanda and Sānti. But they designate an altogether different state, if *Sukha* stands for sense pleasure as it ordinarily does. Sāmkhya speaks of three kinds of misery, namely, *ā*dhibhautika, *ā*dhidaivika and ādhyātmika. This classification is accepted generally in the hindu tradition, explicitly or implicitly. It states three causes of suffering namely, external, *divine* (supernatural) and internal respectively. Here external (Ādhibhautika) means caused by other beings including various kinds of animals, birds etc. and human beings also; Ādhidaivika or supernatural means caused by divine forces beyond human control like floods, storm, thunder-bolt and so on; and Ādhyātmika or internal means physical ailment and mental agony. As a matter of fact all suffering is only Ādhyātmika in nature, that is, bodily or mental or both. When it is caused by diseases or worries, it is called internal; when by other animals and men, external; and when by natural calamities, supernatural. The classification as such is of secondary importance. What is noteworthy is the fact that the Hindu philosophers consider it to be the central task of philosophy to attempt a solution to the problem of suffering.

But, what is meant by suffering? We all know what it means to suffer. When it comes to describing that expereince, words fall short. Even then, Manu has given short but apt definitions of Sukha and Duhkha as " Sukha is agreeable experience; and Duhkha is disagreeable experience. "[2] It is the contention of the Hindu thinkers that all kinds of experiences ultimately affect us in terms of Sukha and Dukha. Here, we are concerned with the latter, that is, suffering. But it must be remembered that the problem of suffering is only the negative side of the general problem of *happiness* " Mrtyorma amrtam gamaya " is the basic human yearning.

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[1] *Sāmkhy Kārikā- 1*

So far as physical pains, ailments are concerned, obviously it is the subject to be tackled by the medical Science. What is worth knowing in this connection is the fact that every one who is born in this world is bound to suffer from diseases and old age. The prescription in this connection would be to follow the laws of health, hygiene and medicine and live as natural a life as possible.

There is another cause of physical suffering and it is the inability to satisfy the basic needs of life, like food, shelter etc. The trouble with man is that his needs go on increasing. The whole of the science of economics and also politics is concerned with the economic and social conditions under which these needs will be mostly satisfied. The materialistic approach to life rests content with the creation of those conditions only disrespecting what may be called *divine restlessness,* that is, certain other aspirations such as ones expressed in the Upanisadic prayer- " Asato mā Sadgamaya, Tamaso mā jyotirgamaya, Mrtyormā amrtam gamaya. " The so called secular approach looks at suffering as the function of human evil along with the natural conditions. This human evil, which may be called moral evil, gives rise to such malefiscent social conditions, including social stratification, relations etc. as result into human suffering. In other words much of our suffering is man-made and is due to the lack of harmonious social order and interrelations. In order, therefore, to get rid of suffering, what we must do is to have a good social order which is

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[2] Anukūla-vedanīyam Sukham: Pratikūla-Vedanīyam duhkham.

based on the humanistic values and which is free from exploitation, inequality, poverty etc. etc.

Now, the question arises-what is a good society? We have a number of ideologies presenting varying conceptions of good life-individual and social. Hinduism also has something important to say about this. But what is important here for our purpose is its distinctive approach to the solution of the problem of suffering itself. While the secular humanists try to solve it by manipulating and reconstructing or transforming the world, the Hindu-thinkers suggest that suffering can be got rid of only by self-transformation. Here, suffering means painful mental disturbances caused mainly by the powerful play of emotions, what are called *Vikāras*, Sadvikāras for example, and Vṛttis. There is another source of painful experience, viz. frustration of desire. Satisfied desire gives us pleasure, while frustrated one disturbs us painfully. Hence the Hindu thinkers speak of getting rid of vāsanās or Tṛṣṇā or Kāmanās etc.

It is not the case that the Hindu thinkers disregard the importance of the social i. e. external causes of suffering. They have developed a socio-political philosophy also. But their firm conviction is that the root of suffering lies in the individual human being, his scale of values, his outlook on life, basically his attitudes towards the things, happeings, and beings constituting his environment. The oft-mentioned example of a pessimist and an optimist looking at the same half-full (half-empty) jar is significant. As Shelley has beautifully put it, in stead of living in the present, always "we look before and after and pine for what is not."[3] If we develop a suitable appproach to life, things, happenings and events will cease to trouble us. If, side by side, this philosophy of life also enjoins us to care for and promote others' well-being, that would be the best thought to follow. In the absence of such an individual transformation it is useless to talk of even social transformation. And even if the external social structure, and organization, changes to the philosopher's heart's content, it is not going to eradicate suffering, so long as the individual personalities are not oriented properly. Thus, even the 'change - of - society-approach' can not work without 'change - of - individual-approach' which is more basic of the two. Take care of penny and the pound will take care of itself. In spite of a democratic *set-up,* we are hardly democratic in our attitudes. This is the basic thinking, as I understand it, behind whatever the Hindu thinkers have said about the means of achieving the goal/goals of life called by them puruṣārthas. They considered it immaterial whether their thought is labelled as religious or secular, philosophical or common-sense, so long as the path delineated takes us to the goal. With this background, I may point out certain important thoughts concerning suffering and its irradication.

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[3] *P. B. Shelly : To the Skylark.*

One very significant statement that occurs in the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad, is, "Yo vai bhūmā tat sukham; nālpe sukhamasti" (7-23-1), meaning, 'that which is *great* is sukha, sukha does not reside in the *small.*" *Bṛhat* from which *Brahman* is formed, also means the *great,* that is, all-comprehensive. Nothing is left out of it. In this sense it is *ananta* (infinite). Practically this means, we suffer to the extent to which we have narrow, selfish outlook; widen it and you will be happy. Obviously this has a reference to the Advaita Vedānta view that Dvaita is the cause of suffering, and Advaita that of happiness-Ananda. Hence treat others as the expressions of your very self and enjoy fearlessness and peace.

Alongwith *dvaita,* desires (*vāsanās*) are also the source of suffering. This may appear paradoxical to a superficial understanding. What is meant is that *desires* are the source not only of pleasure, when satisfied, but also of suffering when frustrated. The further thinking is that there is no guarantee of their satisfaction. Hence they ought to be looked upon as the source of suffering. We are dependent on others for their satisfaction, hence they are unreliable as the source of pleasure. That is why, Manu, in this context, gives definitions of *sukha-duhkha* as "All that depends on other is *duhkha;* and all that is self-dependent is *sukha*". The notions of

Ātmānanda, Svānanda, Svantahsukha etc. are significant in this context. The lesson, therefore, is that one should try to be as free from Vāsanās (Kāmanās, tṛṣṇas etc.) as possible, and to depend only on oneself, not on others, for one's happiness. The Gitā doctrine of *Niṣkāma karma* along with the doctrine of *Svadharma* is the best possible exposition of this kind of Philosophy of life.

Some students of the Gitā have considered Niskāma Karma to be an impossible ideal, psychologically. For, no action, according to them, can be undertaken without some desire or the other. I do not wish to discuss the Gitā doctrine, here, at any length. I may only say that there is a distinction between motive and desire; there can be other motives than desire, duty for duty's sake for example. The main point is that we can reduce suffering to the extent to which we can reduce desires.

Another very basic source of suffering is what is technically called *Ahaṁkāra* or egoity. Its characteristic expression is the sense of doership and enjoyership, that is, the conviction that I am the doer and enjoyer of whatever I do. Prima facie there is nothing wrong in this. In fact, without this kind of responsibility, no social life is possible. But when the Hindu thinkers consider Ahaṁkāra to be number one enemy of man so far as the attainment of Ānanda is considered, they are not undermining the importance of responsible behaviour. They are concerned with the attitude towards life. It is ahaṁkāra that binds the man to the world of sorrows. We consider ourselves to be lords of the situations while in reality, we are slaves. Hence, the saints prescribe that we should do our duty and leave everything to the God-the lord of the universe. This is essentially a religious approach which takes the burden of suffering off our shoulders by taking refuge in the almighty, God. The wordly responsibilities will be there; they will be fulfilled with due care also. But the fruits of the doings will be surrendered to God. This is in fact the religious version of Niṣkāma Karma Yoga. A truly religious man, having merged his ego in the divinity, enjoys happenings in life as the divine play.

Another path of getting rid of our suffering is Yoga. At present, Yoga of various brands including T. M. is widely studied and practised for curing men of their suffering. The peculiarity of Yoga is that it is useful for curing both the physical as well as psychic ailments. Āsanas keep the body physically fit and healthy, while the Rāja Yoga technique keeps the mind sound and balanced. You can march on this path till the goal of *Samādhi* is reached. The Sūtra tells us that Yoga means 'Citta-Vṛtti-nirodha.' A good moral character (Yama, Niyam) and a fit Body (Yogic Kriyas) are a pre-requisite for further development on this path. I need not discuss yoga any further. I may only point out that Yoga is entirely an individual concern; no social considerations are involved in it excepting the importance given to moral character in it.

Lastly, I must refer to what is called the Path of knowledge leading to liberation from suffering. *Jñānat mokṣaḥ* is the dictum. Knowledge in any form and field is power. The sciences have helped mankind to erradicate suffering and make life happy. But as a weapon scientific knowledge can be, and has been, used for evil, as well as for good, purposes. Sciences therefore stand in need of guidance in the light of an adequate outlook on life expressed in a value-system. It is here that Philosophy plays its important role. 'Knowledge' that leads to liberation is a comprehensive concept. In nutshell it stands for the knowledge of *the good*, knowledge of the means of its attainment, knowledge of the technique of transforming this knowledge into practice and finally, actually doing so. In other words, it signifies at once both a view of good life and a way of good life. Whatever else this 'knowledge' may be, it is not merely verbal knowledge. Perhaps it is *virtue* as Socrates said.

The treatment of the problem of human suffering presented by the Hindu thinkers is very comprehensive and detailed. This is because they consider it to be the sole task of philosophy (and religion) to help and guide people in their attainment of a blissful life. Hence, the problem of suffering is, for them, also the problem of happiness, positively. Hindu Philosophy (religion) is primarily Ānanda Mimāṁsā in the form of the *Puruṣārtha Mimāṁsā*. It must be remembered that though *Mokṣa* is recognised to be the *Parama Puruṣārtha*, other puruṣārthas like Kāma, Artha and Dharma are not neglected. Along with *Niḥśreyasa* they speak also of *Abhyudaya*. For both of them Dharma is necessary. Thus, we get an elaborate and comprehensive philosophy of life whose only concern is to get rid of misery and make life an embodyment of happiness.

The basic principle underlying the discussion is that the source of suffering and happiness lies primarily *within* and not without, To put rather hackneyedly, it is the *Dṛṣṭi* that makes the *Sṛṣṭi*. This is not to belittle the importance of social conditions. But after all, what is society apart from the individual members, and social transformation apart from collective individual transformation. As said earlier, so long as man does not change, institutions can not. Even then, it is certainly true that the social institutions must be adequate to embody the prescribed outlook on life.

To my mind, the key concept in the whole of the Hindu thought is ' *Samatva* '. That is why the Gitā also defines yoga as Samatva. Loss of balance or samatva is the cause of suffering; regaining the balance is regaining the lost paradise. According to Āyurveda, when the balance of the Tri-doṣas is disturbed, disease results. Mental suffering is of the nature of disturbance of the equanimity of mind. The vṛitis, the vikāras disturb it. The physiological principle of Homeostasis points to the same thing. Yoga also aims at the attainment of the balanced state of Citta, Samādhi. It is in fact the disturbance in the balance of the three Guṇas of the Prakṛti that is responsible for the *Sarga* or evolution of the world. Thus, when one loses the state of samatva, one suffers; to be happy, one must regain that state. And if one always remains in that state, one will never suffer. Hence the ideal of *Sthitapraiña*.

This samatva has two aspects- *samacittatva*, and Sama dṛṣṭi. The Gitā discusses both these aspects. To remain undisturbed under both positive and negative conditions is *Sama cittatva*; and to look upon all the beings as equal to oneself, is *Sama dṛṣṭi*. Suffering results when we are disturbed in one or both of these aspects. Hence the necessity of Yoga which is of the nature of Samatva.

I have only barely outlined some of the important views contained in the Hindu thought on the problem of human suffering. It is very easy to misunderstand some of them. However, if we catch up the spirit behind the thought and try to put any one of the views that appeals most to us, to test by way of practicing it, we would have helped concretely to solve the problem of suffering in our own individual cases.

It was, in a way, necessary for me to refer to the Law of Karma as an explanation of suffering in this life. But I wanted to confine myself of getting rid of it, including the bondage of the law of Karma itself. Obviously, there are a number of limitations of this paper which is of the nature of a broad survey of some of the thoughts only.

⁂ ⁂

The Poetry Of Sri Aurobindo

N. Pratima

According to Sri Aurobindo under the Western influence the spiritual content in the Indian heritage reasserted itself in the modern world. The world came to know the spiritual depths hidden in the Indian culture. The Indian culture has its roots in the foundation of spirituality, says Sri Aurobindo. In every age the spiritual content of Indian culture came to the forefront. Sri Aurobindo's poetry is an expression of the profound truths embedded in the cultural heritage of India. Sri Aurobindo has projected the vital and spiritual aspects of Indian culture in his poetry and essays. He has stressed on the essential characteristics of Indian culture in a clear way. "Spirituality is indeed the master-key of the Indian mind; the sense of the infinite is native to it. India saw from the beginning, ...and, even in her ages of reason and her age of increasing ignorance, she never lost hold of the insight, ...that life cannot be rightly seen in the sole light, cannot be perfectly lived in the sole power of its externalities."[1] Sri Aurobindo conveys the essential spirit of India in unequivocal terms to the modern world.

Vedic hymns could have been written only by the great seers and mystics who were also great poets. The hymns were the creations of the poets who had the vision of the spiritual reality. The Vedic Rishis presented in grand symbols the hues and colors of the spiritual Reality in a most profound way. The psychological interpretation of the Vedic hymns and the symbols used in them is found in the poetry of Sri Aurobindo. The divine bliss takes one above all dualities

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1. *Sri Aurobindo, The Renaissance in India, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 19 82, p-6*

and contradictions of the world, maintains Sri Aurobindo. The human soul is merged in the ocean of immortality through the realisation of truth. The poetry of Sri Aurobindo combines the religious values with mystic vision of truth. The sacred scripture of India delineates also the spiritual and the poetic approach towards the reality, for the ancient seers were poets of the first order. The poet-saints of the medieval India like Tukaram, Mirabai, Kabir, Surdas, Tulsidas, and at a later period Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and others are the spiritual heirs to the Upanishadic sages. The harmony experienced by the seers is conveyed through the hymns to God. The Bhajans of the medieval saints and the Kirtanas of Sri Tyagaraja, Annamacharya and Muthuswami Dikshitar throb with the purest bhakti in a poetic diction which is entirely musical. Poetry and music serve as the two paths to reach the single goal of spiritual realisation.

Sri Aurobindo is a great mystic and his poetry conveys his vision of the ultimate truth. Similarly, Tagore's poetry, especially Gitanjali expresses his mysticism. Mystic elements are also in the poetry of S'arojani Naidu. Many Indian poets of the present century have the spiritualistic world-view, and among such poets Sri Aurobindo occupies a lofty place, for he was a rishi who had completely renounced the world. He pointed out that the poet has to present his awareness of the pure Spirit pervading the universe. The poet is to become the medium for the revelation of the ultimate truth. The poetry attains the status of a Mantra for Sri Aurobindo. The mystic can bring out the hidden truth in him and reassert the glory of his atman. Sri Aurobindo says,

> In us is the thousandfold Spirit who is one,
> An eternal thinker calm and great and wise.
> A seer whose eye is an all-regarding sun,
> A poet of the cosmic mysteries.[2]

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[2] *Sri Aurobindo, " Lila, " Collected Poems, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1972, p-142*

The Life Divine is the magnum opus of Sri Aurobindo in which he has developed his theory of poetry known as 'overhead' aesthesis.'[3] According to this theory there is no difference between the beauty and divine. The divine is the source of joy or *ananda*. The divine attributes are reflected in harmony, rhythm and form. The divine inspiration produces poetry and art of the highest order containing truth and bliss. The divine is the source of inspiration for the poet. The divine is above the level of sense understanding. The poet can receive the tidings from the divine when he crosses the confines of commonsense, logic and intellect. The poetry of the mystics convey the nature of the spiritual reality which is above the ordinary modes of understanding.

The overhead poetry of Sri Aurobindo has established the supremacy of the spiritual truth and amalgamation of the intellect and emotions. Sri Aurobindo's poetry throws light on the significance of the here and hereafter, the self and reality, the material and spiritual and also the Supreme Indivisible One. A keen awareness of one's individuality and its unfathomable depths find expression in Sri Aurobindo.

My heart is a centre of infinity,
    My body a dot in the soul's vast expanse.
All being's huge abyss wakes under me,
    Once screened in gigantic Ignorance.[4]

Sri Aurobindo's great epic Savitri depicts the search for truth and also the shape of the future poetry. Savitri provides an antidote to the existential suffering of man in the present world. In Savitri Sri Aurobind has projected the struggle of the human being to reach the stage of perfection. The mystic vision of Sri Aurobindo of the highest truth is found in his poems. Poetry has conveyed the nature of truth and provided

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3. *K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, Adventure of Criticism, Asia, 1962, p-26*
4. *Sri Aurobindo, " The Self's Infinity, " Collected Poems, p-142*

spiritual guidance since ancient times. Sri Aurobindo has revitalised the ancient belief that poetry can gain a Mantric quality to uplift the human being toward greater heights of self-realisations. The soul appears in full spiritual glory in Savitri. In this epic there is a fine synthesis of the spiritual and the material. Such tendencies are not missing in the western poetry and T. S. Eliot's Four Quarters is one such example.

In his epic Savitri Sri Aurobindo has expressed his mystic awareness of the reality. Savitri is a long poem which gives the overhead view of the eternal time. The tribulations faced by the human soul here and hereafter, and the promise of the highest order of existence are traced by Sri Aurobindo in a poetic idiom which is awe inspiring. In Savitri Sri Aurobindo has unveiled the face of death. Savitri exhibits the power of spirit or atman which can overcome the hurdle of death. Savitri's victory is the victory of the human self over transient forces, for the self or atman is above all bonds, and even death has no power over it. Sri Aurobindo has stressed in Savitri that the self or atman in the human being is the light of immortality. Savitri is the embodiment of the infinite truth which is Atman. The particular has no place before the universal and mortality is nothing before immortality. Before the light of atman the forces of evil and death get defeated. Sri Aurobindo says,

> Mortality bears ill the eternal's touch.
> It fears the pure divine intolenrance
> Of that assault of ether and of fire;[5]

The triumph of Savitri over death and evil symbolises the triumph of the human spirit over the forces of destruction in the world.

The poetry of Sri Aurobindo can be compared with that of William Blake, William Wordsworth, William Butler,

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[5] *Sri Aurobindo, " The Symbol Dawn, " Savitri, Book I, Canto I*

Yeats, T. S. Eliot and Rabindranath Tagore. The feeling for the presence of the divine power in nature characterise the poets who have faith in the path of mysticism. The mystic fervour has taken these poets into the structure of the racial myths, beliefs and the ethos to identify the moorings which can give refuge to the panic stricken self of the human being in the present world of turmoils, contradictions and crisis. Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath Tagore in the east and Yeats, Eliot and others in the west are indicative of the resurgence of the human spirit from many a shock and trauma in the twentieth century. Sri Aurobindo says,

> I face earth's happenings with an equal soul;
> In all are heard Thy steps : Thy unseen feet
> Tread Destiny's pathways in my front. Life's whole
> Tremendous Theorem is Thou complete. [6]

The Symbolist movement has a deep strain of mysticism and it has given a new direction to the modern poetry. The view point of Sri Aurobindo that poetry has to bring a spiritual transformation in the life of man, certainly adds a new direction to the modern poetry. Poetry is spiritualised by Sri Aurobindo. The poet soars on the wings of imagination like the bird of Vishnu to survey the expanses of reality, and finds himself engulfed on all sides with infinite space, and is struck by the feeling of loneliness, achievement and realisation. For Sri Aurobindo,

> Thought the great-winged wanderer paraclete
> Disappeared slow-singing a flame-word rune.
> Self was left, lone, limitless, nude, immune.[7]

In the poem *The Blue Bird* Sri Aurobindo has presented his mystic apprehension of reality. The bird is the symbol of the atman of man. The blue bird is compared with the

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6. *Sri Aurobindo, "The Divine Worker", Collected Poems p-143*
7. *Sri Aurobindo, "Thought the Paraclete", Collected Poems, p-532*

infinite atman in man. The song of the bird is in praise of God. The prayer of the poet is also for God. The blue bird proudly proclaims that,

> Nothing is hid from my burning heart;
> My mind is shoreless and still;
> My song is rapture's mystic art,
> My flight immortal will.[8]

The aspiration of the human soul to gain access to the core of reality is voiced by Sri Aurobindo in this poem. The thirst for immortality, eternal peace and unity with the divine draw the human soul towards the reality. The atman is guided by its own light towards the divine. The human soul is like the bird in its flight towards the higher reaches of reality, says Sri Aurobindo.

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What is God ?

Remaining in the heart of everyone as the self, He holds all the souls like the thread which holds all the beads of a necklace. He is one without a second. He is infinite Truth, infinite Love and infinite Knowledge. Prajnanum Brahma. " This infinite wisdom is Brahman. " say the Vedas.

Sant Keshavadas.
(Stories and Parables)

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[8] *Sri Aurobindo, "The Blue Bird", Collected Poems, p-104*

The Problem of Evil And Good

Prof. M. P. Lakhani

We find that there is no joy in life. Everywhere there is struggle and strife, there is so much pain, suffering and misery. One man is trying to cut another; one set of people are opposed to another; one community distrusts and is at daggers drawn with its neighbour; one nation tries to domineer over another. All along there is scramble for money and power and one wonders why this is so. Why can we not live in peace and harmony specially when Nature provides us with things in abundance such that we all can have our share and live contentedly.

To answer this question, it is necessary to go into the origin of the cause of this struggle; and to understand evil, its necessity and its value in life.

In nature there are always pairs of opposite forces working; good, bad, destructive, constructive; contracting, expanding; dissipative, conserving; cold, hot; rough, smooth; bitter, sweet; dark, light; backwards, forwards; down, up; hate, love; cruelty, sympathy; hard, soft; slow, fast and so forth. Of the pairs one part is good, the other evil e. g., constructive is good and destructive evil; love is good and hate evil and so on.

There is another basic principle of life which is Evolution. Everything is evolving, everything has to evolve to reach the ultimate end, whatever that end be. Since Evolution is the Law of Life, it is reasonable to say that the forces that lead to evolution are good, and those that oppose evolution are evil.

To bring good to the front, evil is necessary. Just as the obstruction to the flow of water is essential for raising its level, so is the bad essential to the manifestation of the good. For example, extreme cruelty is necessary to rouse the observer to the pitch of indignation, to bring his sense of sympathy and justice to the front and lead him to endeavour to right the wrong. It is extreme suffering and misery that gives rise to sympathy, charity and sense of brotherhood. It is extreme exploitation and tyranny that produces the desire in the mind of the slave to try and win his freedom. Being forced into a tight corner even a mouse turns round, defies and terrifies the cat or the dog that is pursuing it. Even the worm does turn-but when? Then only when it is put to extreme hardship. French revolution was the result of inhuman tyranny of the upper classes. If the hardship, misery, tyranny or any other bad component of the pair is not great, the victim gets used to it; becomes resigned and puts forth no effort to resist it, to combat it–thus all his potentialities of progress are arrested. Thus the evil is not only useful but absolutely essential as stimulus for progress, for development, for bringing to the front the divinity in main.

There is a story in Hindu Puranas : Suras and Asuras, the Devas and the Daityas-with a mountain as a spindle and a snake as a rope, churn the ocean. The Asuras are at the head of the snake and the Suras at the tail. On churning the ocean, they obtain 'ratanas' -the priceless objects from the ocean. This story illustrates the above point. Ocean represents life, snake represents time. Asuras devils-are at the head of the snake i.e., at the beginning of time and the angels are at the end of time. Churning of ocean is the struggle of life. Evil starts the struggle, good comes to grips with it, both churn the ocean of life and get divine presents i.e., divinity out of this conflict. It is the Evil that brings forth the Divine.

Is not the Devil, therefore, more useful to mankind than the Angels: Devil acts as a stimulus on man and rouses him to achieve great heights. It is he who is responsible for growth.

But for him life would be stagnant. He is cursed and abused on all sides.. He takes these curses and abuses and yet goes about doing his good work, the work of bringing the divinity in man to the front, the work of bringing man nearer to his Creator. Devil is a very important factor in the scheme of evolution and must, therefore, be dearer to God than all the angels.

But, remember, that because evil is useful and essential, it is no reason for us to indulge in it. Poison is useful and necessary for the cure of some very malignant diseases, but surely that is no reason for us to swallow it. If we do, we will suffer. Similarly, if we indulge in evil, we shall have to bear the consequences. Poison can be useful and usefully employed if we know what it is, its nature and its reactions. So can we use and usefully employ evil to obtain good results if we know its laws. Electricity is a very useful source of energy but it is extremely dangerous and destructive if not handled properly. It is only he who knows its laws that can employ it usefully for constructive work. A criminal has evil propensities, but if we employ him to catch other criminals and so engage his evil propensities for the good of society, he becomes an extremely useful member of society.

It was Kaiser's lust for power that was responsible for the world-war of 1914 which though an evil, resulted in removing considerably the class distinction. It was after this war that several labour movements came into existence which have been progressively working for the decrease of the tyranny of classes. Also, incidentally, this resulted in the increase of the status of woman. During war-time when the national man-power was engaged in fight, women got a chance to do the work at home which had hitherto been done by man-and she showed that not only she can do it all, but do it better. Thus equality of sexes is being established and woman is getting emancipated. The Second World War was due to Hitler's desire for supremacy and resulted in further removal of class distinction; in further emancipation of woman; removal of the oppression of capitalism.

It is because of Ravana that Shri Ramchandra had to be born; it is because of Kansa that Shri Krishna had to incarnate and they utilised the existing evil to create war with Ravana and Mahabharat and give new teaching-new light and life to mankind. It is because of the existence of evil that Divinity comes down from time to time to guide and give a new and fresh impetus to evolution. It is because of the increase of evil that masters and teachers come to open out new and necessary paths to evolution.

Man has two demands within him, the demand of the flesh and the demand of the spirit. The demand of the flesh consists in the desires which need the fulfilment of the material needs-the needs of the senses. While the demand of the spirit is to rise above the desires of the senses, to become more of the spirit and merge in the divine. This is the Eternal Conflict. This conflict is the eternal Principle which is responsible for Evolution.

Evolution consists is acquiring the good part of the pairs of opposites and weeding out the evil. But we cannot kill or destroy evil. Evil being one of the basis of life, to destroy evil will be to destroy life and this is beyond us. We can only master evil, transcend it, transmute it. Evolution, therefore, consists in transmuting evil.

Evil and good are only two sides of the same coin. Qualities when applied to matter or rather when the forces work on the lower plane of matter they produce what we call evil, and when they work on higher and subtler planes, they obtain results that we call divine. Thus there is no evil or good in itself but it is the application that make it evil or good. Hence, evolution consists in diverting our desires, emotions and mind from things of matter to those of spirit. It does not consist in killing but in diverting, sublimating.

The whole game of life started with the creation of these pairs of opposites or positive and negative. Before life began, the material from which the manifested world is fashioned was neutral i. e., without any properties, without the pairs of opposites, without being good or evil. It was 'Nirguna.' Creater separated this neutral matter into two parts-the positive and the negative and the material now acquired qualities, it became 'Suguna.' In this separation, in this acquiring of qualities, in this acquiring of the pairs of opposites, the manifestation came into existence. This will be easier to follow from an illustration: let electric current pass through a closed electric circuit. If the two electrodes are separated by a short distance, current will flow across the air gap from positive to negative electrode producing a spark giving out light and sound. Now, if the electrodes are slowly brought nearer to each other till they are in contact with each other, the spark will disappear, i. e., there will be no manifestation of light and sound though the current will flow through the circuit as before. It is the separation of the continuity of the circuit into the positive and the negative electrodes which causes the manifestation of light and sound. So also, though life pervades through the quality-less matter, it manifests not. It is when the matter is separated into the positive and the negative or into good and evil, i. e., when it acquires qualities that the manifestation results, it is then that life starts as we understand it.

Again, the Creator having produced manifestation, wants His Spirit to descend into matter right upto the grossest form of it in order to give it life and spiritualise it, and having reached the lower-most depths, the Spirit wants to ascend, to get out of matter and unite with the Origin. This is known as involution and evolution. Descending down into matter is involution, and ascending, getting free of matter and becoming unalloyed spirit is evolution. It is like water from clouds. Clouds are water vapour. This vapour descends and in its descent becomes water which is grosser than vapour. Descending, it reaches the lowest level possible, it goes to the bottom-most layer of earth and mixes with earth, vegetation, birds, fishes, animals and man and gives them life. Life without water can not exist. Mixing with various things it seems to become one with it. Falling on dirt, it becomes dirty; falling on rose it becomes scented; falling on sugar it becomes sweet; falling on salt it becomes salty; falling on red colour it becomes red and so on. Having given life, it wants to leave all matter and once more evaporate and ascend as vapour. When it ascends as vapour, it is as pure as it was when it descended. It carries nothing of the matter it came in contact with. While mixing with matter it seems to become one with it, but when it ascends it ascends as pure vapour-it is unaffected by matter. Matter leaves no impression on it, while it leaves its impression on matter it came in contact with, it gives life and so leaves its stamp on matter it enlivened. Similarly, does pure Spirit descend into matter, gives it life, spiritualises it and ascends to go back as pure Spirit unaffected by its sojourn through matter.

Involution, the downward journey is to get enmeshed into matter more and more and is what we call evil. Evolution, the upward journey, the desire to get out of matter, to become pure spirit again is what we call good. But evolution is not posssible without involution. There can be no rise without a fall. Good is not possible unless there exists evil. Thus evil and good are only two qualities of the same thing; they are only two sides of the same unit; they are only the downward and the upward parts of the journey of life. A magnet, however small will, always have two poles, the positive and the negative. It is not possible to have a single isolated pole. And the two poles are opposite in their nature. So also are the evil and good two sides of the same unit-the Life. The two must go together, they cannot be isolated.

All evil i. e., all desires of the senses can be grouped under five headings, lust (Kama), anger (Krodha), avarice (Lobha), attachment (Moha) and pride (Anhankar). Any desire or emotion can be analysed and traced to one of these five. Lust is the grossest and pride the subtlest of these. This is apparent if we look into their nature. Lust is primarily connected with form, body i. e., with physical matter. Anger is caused by some one or something and is, therefore, connected more with the physical than emotional. Anger, not unoften, involves action and involves emotion as well as mental reaction. Avarice is in connection with something physical, involves more of emotional and mental elements than does anger. Attachment may be with something physical or with an idea and thus involves less of physical and increasingly more of emotional and mental factors. Pride is more mental than emotional or physical. Thus from lust to pride, the physical is decreasingly involved, while the emotional and the mental are increasingly involved. Hence pride is subtler than attachment, which in its turn is subtler than avarice and so on.

Though lust is grosser and pride subtler, each one of them have various grades. Thus lust though gross can be and does become subtler and subtler and pride which is subtle can become gross.

Not only that but all good i.e., divine qualities can also be reduced to the same five headings as the evil. This looks a little intriguing, but if we take each quality separately and illustrate it by examples, this statement will become clear.

Kama-lust or sensuality-is what we generally call by the name 'love'. Love is a desire for unity. In its grossest form it springs when one sees a person of the opposite sex. The desire for unity expresses itself by the desire of the union of the two physical bodies. Love in its grossest form is canalised. It runs along a grove, along the channel of sex-since that part of human body reacts most sensitively to this desire. Later on when even a contact of hands thrills, the whole body has become as sensitive as the sexual part. Increase and refinement of love floods the whole body and makes each part of it as sensitive as the special part viz., the sex part. At the next stage there may be no desire for physical contact with the loved one, his or her presence alone is necessary. Still later, the necessity of presence also vanishes. Perhaps, the lover or the beloved is in another city, but an assurance is necessary that the other responds This takes the form of writing letters regularly and exchange of presents etc. Still later, even the necessity of this assurance disappears. The lover loves the beloved irrespective of whether the beloved responds or not. The lover loves for the sake of love; he gives himself and asks for nought. Finally, lover loves all, the whole humanity, nay, all the creation and finds unity with the whole. We see that in these various stages desire for the contact of the physical body increasingly decreases and love becomes increasingly refined till it reaches the hight where lover loves the whole creation as one single unit, finds unity in the whole and merges into it. Surely this is Divinity. Starting from the grossest stage one has reached the divine state for the same emotion-love. In between the first and the last stages there are innumerable degrees of refinement. Lust may be created by the presence of a person, or by a picture, or by the description of a voluptuous scene or by reading love literature. All this is gross form in varying degrees. Love of a mother is known to be of a higher level because a mother gives her all to the child expecting nothing in return for the moment. I say for the moment, because there is generally a feeling, a hope in the sub-conscious mind if not in the conscious that the child will be a support in one or the other form to her in the old age. In that much it contains the germ of grossness. Further, though the love of the mother may be unselfish, yet it is for her child only and is thus restricted and this restriction makes it less perfect If one could feel the mother's love not only for his or her own child, but for all humanity, for all creation, giving all and expecting nothing, it is love in its highest form, love most divine. Mother's love is commonly considered the highest stage of love in human beings because it is nearer to the divine than any other human love; because it is only one step removed from what we claim to be divine love.

Love of a wife entails giving her body and mind. Yet is it selfish in as much as it is connected by physical ties; it contains in it the germ of expectation, of response of possession and is, therefore, restricted.

Love for an ideal is more abstract and less gross. Love for the guru is more refined for it stands for the ideals he represents.

Anger, in general, is the result of the obstruction to the fulfilment of one's desire. Whenever anger arises due to some obstruction to the fulfilment of sensual desires, it is gross. The servant has not obeyed your instructions, you have not received food in time, you did not get food of the type you desired, you did not get clothes to your taste, you have not been able to get leave to which you were looking forward with such anticipation of pleasure, your friend did not come when you sent for him, some one did not receive you well, proper attention was not paid to you and so you get angry. These instances and many more show us that whenever things go contrary to our desires, anger results.

When we see tyranny, injustice and misery inflicted on others, it makes us angry. This is noble indignation. This anger may excite us to action calculated to right the wrong. This anger is therefore desirable and good because it tends to produce a result that brings peace and happiness.

One wants to reform his child, or an assistant or a servant. All methods have failed. He comes to the conclusion that anger will alone produce the required result. In this case anger is good, useful and necessary. Anger, in this case, will result in reform, happiness and evolution. Such anger cannot be called gross.

Failure to attain one's ideal may result in anger, causing increase of effort in the direction of the attainment of the goal. Anger will thus be very useful and therefore good.

Lobha or avarice is the desire for possession-or rather the desire to possess more than one's average share, to possess very much more than is necessary, more than one needs or can make use of. To eat more than is good for health in order to satisfy palate is avarice. To hoard goods or money in excess of one's need is avarice. To covet another's share or possession in addition to one's own is avarice. By hoarding things one deprives others of their share and so causes suffering and pain. Capitalism is the result of avarice and we know that the misery in the world today is due to capitalism.

Yet avarice can be a potent force for development. Avarice for knowledge, avarice for doing good, for service, for evolution are necessary to reach the goal.

Similarly, is Moha or attachment gross or refined. Attachment to things mundane, attachment to things conducive to our sensual satisfaction is gross. Attachment to drink, smoke, things satisfying palate, books, pictures, clothes etc. is for the satisfaction of our sensual desires. Attachment to parents is born of our weakness, of our dependence on them, of the comfort and support they are to us. Attachment to friends may be prompted by vanity, by desire of companionship, by the pleasure it affords in various ways. Attachment to wife or husband is born of our need of a partner in life in various spheres. Attachment to children is a reflection of our attachment to ourselves, children being the flesh of our flesh. All these forms of attachment help our being caught and detained in the material and sensual world and in that much it is harmful.

If on the other hand, we get attached to the things of the mind and the spirit, it will help us to get away from the material and go towords the spiritual. Attachment to knowledge, to service, to high ideals of justice, sympathy, understanding, compassion. benevolence, love etc. take one nearer to divinity.

Ahankar or pride is due to the feeling that one is superior to others. Pride is a subtle feeling and enters every phase of life and more often than not the victim is unconscious of its existence. To consider oneself superior to the rest is ignorance. There are innumerable steps in reaching the final perfection. For any one to consider himself superior to the rest is not to be aware of this fact.

One wears nice clothes and thinks he or she looks very attractive. At a social function, one wants to show himself off. One has property or a car and he looks down upon those who haven't. One travels first class and looks contemptuously at those travelling by lower class. One has a bank balance and he feels mighty great. One has a very good job and he thinks he is entitled to receive homage from every one round him. One has a relative in a position of power and authority and he will advertise the fact and give himself airs. Innumerable examples can be given. This, however, is vulgar or gross pride. There are subtler phases of it.

A proud man-let us say-is conscious of his pride. It is not usual to be conscious of one's pride-this also he knows. Then he says that he is conscious of his pride and feels proud of being able to be conscious of this. This pride is a step removed towards subtler side. If he becomes conscious of this subtle pride and feels proud of this knowledge, then he suffers from pride removed two steps towards the subtler end. This can go on ad infinitum. Pride can be so subtle as to be invisible to the subtlest analyst.

Persons who have reached great spiritual heights have still suffered from pride. Even gods have felt proud and have had to be taught lessons by Him who is greater than them. Those travelling along the spiritual path are warned against the pitfall of pride. In occult literature it is shown that often the final unity has been delayed, because of this snake of pride. that it is the complete, the very absolute self-surrender that gains the ultimate union.

Thus we see that good and evil are only two sides of the same thing as the two poles are the two ends of the same magnet. Evil cannot be separated from good. They both must co-exist. Evil consists in getting enmeshed into matter or in going through involution and good consists in getting above matter or going through evolution. Evolution presupposes involution as rise presupposes fall. Those whom we consider evil are only passing through the process of involution and those whom we consider good are passing through the process of evolution. But those who are passing through evolution must have passed through involution before i. e., they must have been evil some when. If that is so, surely we cannot call any one superior to another since everyone has passed or will pass through the same stages. Everyone has to go through this double journey. Only one has begun earlier, the other later and that is why they are at different stages. Or one has been quicker than the other. But time has no place in the Divine Scheme. Hence we can judge nobody. Not only that but we should not feel pain or pleasure at any thing, since all that happens is a part of the game of life. To feel pain or pleasure is to show ignorance.

Everyone whether animal or man is seeking for happiness. Whatever one does, he does, because, according to him it is expected to bring him pleasure. Whether he does evil or he does good, he does it because he expects it to yield him joy. One abuses, hurts, hates, tyranises, cheats, steals etc. because he thinks that his happiness consists in doing that. Whether his action really brings him happiness or not is another matter. It is a matter of experimentation. If any action does not bring him peace and joy he will not repeat it. By experimenting continuously he learns to differentiate between what brings joy and what does not; what brings pain and what avoids pain. Also, what brings temporary satisfaction and pleasure and what brings sustained joy. By experimenting he suffers the consequences of what he does and learns to do only that which brings lasting joy and peace and avoid that which opposes it.

He will realise that getting over the desires of the senses gives joy. This everyone must have felt. To take an example; say, one has decided to devote twenty minutes in the morning to concentration. When he is at it, several thoughts intrude and he cannot check their entry. He feels disappointed and tired and wants to stop the practice But something from within advises him to persist not to yield, at least sit there those twenty minutes even though other thoughts intrude. He listens and sits through. At the end of it, though he did not succeed in being able to concentrate, yet there will be a subtle satisfaction for having stuck on and not having yielded to the temptation of stopping the efforts.

Let us take another example; one wants to do a dirty thing-something he knows is not right to do, but still he very much desires to do. Let us suppose he yields to the temptation and does it. It yields him momentary pleasure, but it is always followed by regret (less or more in its intensity depending upon several factors) for having done it. Again, let us suppose that he does not yield to the temptation-that he triumphs over his desire. It pains him to have given up the anticipated joy. He feels disappointed and even dejected for not yielding to the temptation. But all this suffering and pain is due to the pangs of death of the temptation. It is the senses that are feeling dejected for being robbed of their pleasure. It is death of matter. This pain is felt by his material self because of the starvation and death he decreed for it. If he composes himself, sits quiet and listens to and observes what is going on within him-within the deeper depths within him-he will be conscious of a peculiar feeling of satisfaction, of righteousness, and will feel elated standing at a higher moral level than the one he was at before he opposed the temptation. He will feel a sense of security and safety, as if he has been saved from falling down a precipice. And though sad (because of the death of lower nature) he feels strangely calm and stronger. This feeling is due to the triumph of spirit over senses. What is death for the material-self is life-fluid for the spirit-self and vice versa. This feeling of calmness and peace is in the beginning, perhaps, very weak, so weak that one hardly observes it unless one gives some positive attention to it. This is because the spirit has been starved for long and it is too weak to be able to move, to have its existence made felt. Feed it increasingly and its life movements will be increasingly felt till it becomes so strong that it will have itself felt effectively; will be so strong that it will not allow the lower-self to raise its hood. The Divine bliss and peace that will accrue will not let us descend into the mire of sensual desires

At present you may not care to oppose temptation, you may not strive to get out of the mesh of a matter, but sooner or later you will be compelled to do so. The ingrained desire in you for joy and peace, the desire for the reunion with pure spirit will assert itself- it will be the " Hound of Heaven '- and force you towards this end. If you put forth effort now, it will help you to finish your journey sooner and get submerged into the Divine earlier. But time, as I said, is of no consequence. Every one of us will attain the ultimate union somewhen.

But to return to the question we started with viz,, why so much pain and suffering. The pain and suffering is because humanity is enmeshed in matter and is getting more and more entangled into it. It seems that the present era is a period of involution. In Nature there are always maxima and minima, a rise and an ebb. The present period is the period of ebb. It will be followed by a period of rise-of evolution when humanity will feel joy and peace. Thus, evil and good are two essential factors in the process of evolution. To push forward human evolution, everyone of us can help by putting forth effort to transcend evil yourself and help others to do the same.

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Moral Life

The fundamental principle of morality is that we should aim at Communion with God. Good is that which contributes to the realisation of the Infinite. That which does not so contribute, is evil.

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A Critique of the Philosophy of Islam

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Jabalpur.

I

The word Islam[1] does not belong to any particular person, people or country. It is a universal religion and its objective is to create and cultivate in man the quality and attitude of Islam. Islam is an attributive title; whosoever possesses this attribute, may he belong to any race, community, country or clan, is a Muslim. Islam is an Arabic word and connotes submission, surrender and obedience to God. Another meaning of Islam is peace. According to Islamic faith a person can achieve real peace of body and of mind only through submission and obedience to Allah. Such life of obedience brings in peace of the heart and establishes real peace in the society at large. According to the Encyclopaedia of Philosophy Islam means not fatalistic submission to the deity, but striving after righteousness, the deity of law, obedienc to rules and formal performance of outward duties. It means the acceptance of divine will. Islam stresses the legal and external performance of religion.

Islamic philosophy as it exists today is the result of a continuous process of development during the fourteen centuries of the existence of Islam. According to the classical theory, it consists of the express injunctions of the Quran; of the legislation introduced by the practice of the prophet and the opinions of lawyers. In certain cases the opinion of jurists may coincide on a point, and this is known as *Ijma* or consensus; in others, it may not-this is called *qiyas* or analogical deduction.[2] Islamic law is not a systematic code, but a living and growing organism, nevertheless there is amongest its different schools a large measure of agreement, because the starting point and the principles are identical.[3] Islam is a socialistic and a democratic creed; socialistic, because, it divides the estate of a person after his death compulsorily and distributes it among his nearest relations, male and female; democratic, because it preaches equality among human beings and the brotherhood of man.

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[1] *Abul Ala Moududi, Towards Understanding Islam (7th Ed.) p 1*

Islam also believes in brotherhood.[4] From the practical point of view, the principle of brotherhood which Islam has preached—and not only preached but made real—is one of its greatest glories. In his last sermon, the Prophet told his people that excellence consisted only in deed. Pride of colour or race was utterly condemned. The Arab is not superior to the non-Arab; the non-Arab is not superior to the Arab. You are all sons of Adam, and Adam was made of Earth.[5] Thus Islam teaches that all the human beings living in this world are equal. They should be treated equally. This mesage was also given by Lord Budhha long back.

Count Leon Ostrorog,[6] a great European authority on

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[2] *Fyzee, Outlines of Muhammadan Law, p 1; J. Schacht, Origin of Muhamadan Jūris, (Oxford, 1950)*

[3] *M Khadduri and H. J. Liebesny, Origin and Development of Islamic law (Washington, 1955): J N D Anderson and N. J. Coulson, Islamic law in Contemporary Cultural change, (Munich,) XVII, (1967), 14-92; Abdur Rahim, Jurisprudence, p 1 Ameer Ali, Spirit of Islam, Muhammadan (2nd Ed.) p 255-6*

[4] *R. Levy, Social Structure of Islam, (Cambridge, 1957), p 53*

[5] *See Muir, Life of Mohammad (4th Ed) (1923); Ameer Ali, Spirit of Islam, 113-114; Shibli, Sirat II; Fyzee, A Modern Approach to Islam (Bombay, 1963)*

[6] *Ostrorog, The Angora Reform, 99*

Muslim law, in concluding his lectures on 'The Angora Reform' in the University of London said 'However that may be, Islam, with its glorious history, its magnificent literature, its simple stoical tenets, will certainly remain, for many millions, at the very least an ideal, a moral doctrine, teaching men to be clean, abstenious, brave and charitable, proclaining as fundamental commandment the noble Quranic verse: Verily God commands you to be just and kind— a religion, nothing more, but such a religion that even those who do not profess it, but have studied it with a certain care, render it the tribute of a deep sympathy and a profound respect.'

For becoming a true Muslim, faith in certain things is absolutely necessary. In Arabic language it is knownas *Iman*. The man who knows and reposes unshakable belief in the unity of God, in His Attributes, in His law and the revealed guidance and in the divine code of reward and punishment is called *Momin* (faithful). According to Islamic faith there is only one creator and governor of this universe. He only controls and directs the universe. These witnesses reflect the divine attributes of the creator. There are also people who believe that there are two Gods, some other began to profess belief in trinity and still some others succumbed to polytheism. Some began nature worship and others divided divinity into multifarious deities; gods of rains, air, fire, life, death etc. The result of such approaches has been that although the manifestations of God were quite clear, human reason has faltered on various courts and failed to see the reality in its true perspective. It resulted in deception and in confusion of thought. According to Islamic faith, through his grace and benevolence God raised for mankind men from among themselves, to whom He imparted the true knowledge of his attributes, revealed to them his law and the right code of living, gave them the knowledge of the meaning and purpose of life and of the life after death and thus showed them the way by pursuing which one can achieve success and eternal bliss. These chosen men are the messengers of God, his prophets.

A Muslim believes in *Iman-bil-ghaib*. He is having faith in the unknown. The words *Iman-bil-ghaib* signifies that you achieve the knowledge of what was not known to you from one who knows that we do not know God and his real attributes. The angels of God direct the machinery of the whole universe according to His orders, and that they surround you on all sides. A Muslim is not having the proper knowledge of the way of life through which you can seek pleasure of your creator. We do not know about the life that is to come. The knowledge in respect of all these matters has been given by Prophets. It is the faith of Muslims that these prophets were sincere and trustworthy. This conviction of Muslims is known as *Iman-bil-ghaib*.

Quran is the very word of God. Supplementary to it we have *hadith*, the traditions of prophet... the records of his actions and his sayings. If there is nothing either in the Quran or in the *hadith* to answer the particular question, we have to follow the dictates of secular of reason in accordance with certain definite principles. These principles constitute the basis of sacred law.

Shariat means the canon law of Islam, the totality of Allah's commandments. Each one of such commandments is called *hukm*. According to the Shariat, religious injunctions are of five kinds.[7] Those strictly enjoined are *fard*, and those strictly forbidden are *haram*. Between them we have two middle categories, namely, things which you are advised to do *(mandub)*, and things which you are advised to refrain from *(makruh)*, and finally there are things about which religion is indifferent *(Jaiz)*.[8] The daily prayers, five in number, are *fard;* wine is *haram;* the additional prayers like those on the *Id* are *mandub*, certain kinds of fish are *makruh;* and there are thousands of *jaiz* things. Under the Islamic philosophy the Shariat is totalitarian; all human activity is embraced in its sovereign domain.[9]

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[7] *Kemal A. Faruki, al ahkam al Khams, The Five Values, Journal of Islamic Research Institute, Pakistan, V (1966), 43-48.*

[8] *See Encyolopaedia of Islam, I!, 105; al Babul-hadi Ashar (tr. Miller)*

The Quran is the first source of law. Its importance is religious and spiritual, no less than legal. The verses of Quran are held to be of paramount authority. The second source of law is the Sunna, the practice of the Prophet. According to Wensink, *hadith* is the mirror of Muslim society,[10] and although modern research tends to show that a large proportion of the traditions ascribed to the prophet are of late origin and doubtful, their importance in establishing the usage of the community and as a formative element in law must never be minimised. The third source of law is *Ijma,* consensus of opinion among the learned of the community. Modern critics consider it to be the most important element of Islamic law. Snouck Hurgronje considers it to be the foundation of foundations and the movable element in the law.[11] The fourth and last source of law is *qiyas,* analogical deduction.[12] According to Schacht 'individual reasoning in general is called ray, opinion. When it is directed towards achieving systematic consistency and guided by the parallel of an existing institution or decision it is called *qiyas*. When it reflects the personal choice of the lawyer, guided by his idea of appropriateness, it is called *istihsan* or *istislah,* preference.[13]

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9 See Gobind Dayal v Inayatullah, (1885) 7 All 775, 815; M Mujeeb, The Indian Muslims (London) (1967), 56; Manmassani (S), Philosophy of Jurisprudence in Islam (Leiden, 1961) 8

10 Wensink, Muslim Creed, 1 Generally see Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1st Ed. IV, 555; see also S.M. Yousuf, The Sunnah I Its Transmission, Development and Revision, Islamic Culture, Hyderabad) XXXVII (1963), 271-72, J. Robson, Encyclopaedia of Islam, III (rev. ed), 23-8

11 See Snouck Hurgronje, Selected Works, 289; see also Malcolm H. Kerr, Islamic Reform (Cambridge, 1966), 76

12 For Ijma see D. B. Macdonaed, Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1st Ed. 11, 448

13. Schacht, Origin of Muhamadan Jurisprudence, p 98

In addition to the four formal sources, there are others which may be termed the material sources of law. First pre-Islamic custom. Secondly, some elements of Roman law seem to have been engrafted on to the Islamic system.[14] Thirdly evidence of the retention of the customs of different peoples and countries is also to be found.[15] English law was also introduced through the doctrine of justice, equity and good conscience.

The prophet of Islam did not create a new system of law; he took the existing Sunna, the prevalent usage and modified it in two ways. First by direct revelation i. e. by way of Quran and second, by his teaching and traditions. There is no authentic record of these teachings. It can not be said whether they represent the Prophet's actual words and actions.

After the death of Prophet Muhammad, Islamic philosophy was further developed by Sunni schools. The first two founders of the sunni school were Abu Hanifa and Malik. The third and fourth schools were founded respectively by Iman Shafii and Iman Hanbali.

In Islam there are two different conceptions of law. Law may be considered to be of divine origin as is the case with the Hindu law and the Islamic law, or it may be conceived as man-made law. In the case of Hindu law, it is based, first on the Vedas, that is Sruti, meaning that which is heard, secondly, it is based on the Smriti or that which is remembered by the sages or rishis. Although the effect of custom is undoubtedly great, yet dharma implies a course of conduct which is approved by God. Hindu and

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[14] *See S. V. Fitzgerald, The Alleged Debt of Islamic law to Roman Law, Law Quarterly Review, (1951) 81*

[15] *See amal, Encyclopaedia of Islam, Revised ed., 1, 427; Levy, Social Structure of Islam, Chapter VI; Snouck Hurgronje Selected Works, 290.*

Muslim laws are so intimately connected with religion that they can not readily be dissevered from it.[16]

II

It is the faith of Muslims that the human race began from one man i. e. Adam. It was from this that the family of man grew and the human race multiplied. All human beings have descended from the earliest pair ...Adam and Eve.[17] Adam was the first man on earth. He was appointed as the first Prophet of God. He revealed his religion... Islam... to him and enjoined him to convey and communicate the same to his descendants, to teach them that Allah is one, the creator, the sustainer of the world. He alone should be worshipped and obeyed; that to Him they will have to return one day and to Him alone they should appeal for help.

The descendants of Adam can be divided into two categories... people who accepted the path shown by Adam and those people who refused to accept the path. Some began to worship the sun, the moon and the stars; others started worshipping trees, animals and rivers. Some believed that air, water, fire, health and all the blessings and forces of nature were each under the control of a different god and that each one of them should be propitiated by means of worship. Adam's descendants forgot even the way of life which God had revealed for them and which their great progenitor had thought them. At this stage God began to raise prophets among every people, who preached Islam to them. They taught them God worship, put an end to idol worship and the practice of shirk i.e. associating other deities with God, did away with all customs of ignorance, taught them the right way of living in accordance with God's pleasure, and gave them life giving laws to be followed and enforced in the society. God's true prophets were raised in all countries, in every land and people. They had all one and the same religion, the religion of Islam[19]. Among all nations in spite of all interpolations, some traces of truth have survived. The idea of God and of the life after death was definitely assimilated in some form or other.

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[16] *See observations of Justice Mahmood, Gobind Dayal v Inayatullah, (1885) 7 All 775; S. C. Banerjee, Hindu Law of Marriage and Stridhana (Tagore Lectures for 1878, 5th ed. Cal 1923)*

[17] *This is a very important revolutionary concept. Its logical result is unity of mankind and the equality of human beings. It is stupid to distinguish and discriminate between men on grounds of class, colour, race or territory. Today when nationalism, narrow racialism etc. have torn the world into shreds, his creed of the unity of mankind is a power ray of hope for the future.*

With the progress and spread of commerce, industry and art, intercourse was established between the nations. It became possible that one and the same faith, envisaging a comprehensive and all embracing way of life, catering to the moral, spiritual, social, cultural, political, economic and all other needs of men and embodying both religious and secular elements be sent by God for the entire mankind. More than 2000 years ago mankind had attained a mental calibre that it all seemed to crave for a universal religion. Buddhism emerged from India. It was not a complete system of life. It spread from Japan and Mongolia to Afghanistan and Bhokhara. A few centuries later, Christianity appeared. Although the religion taught by Jesus Christ was none but Islam, the followers of this religion reduced it into a hotch potch called Christianity. It is clear that the conditions of mankind in that age demanded a common religion for the whole human race. At such a crucial stage of human civilization, when the mind of man was itself hankering for world religion a prophet was raised in Arabia for the whole world and for all nations. The religion he was given to propagate was against Islam. He was made a prophet for the entire human race and was deputed to propagate his mission to the whole world. He was Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam[20].

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[19] *There is a common misconception, mostly among the western writers that Islam owes its origin to Prophet Muhammad and some of the writers even go to the extent of calling him the founder of Islam. It is however submitted that according to Islamic philosophy Islam has been the religion of all the prophets of God and all of them have brought the same message from him. Prophets have not been the founder of Islam, they have only been messengers of it. Islam consists of the Divine Revelation conveyed to the mankind by the truthful prophets.*

III

The following are the articles of faith of Islam :-

Tawheed–Faith in the unity of God :– A Muslim must have faith in *tawheed* or in the dogma of the unity of God. If there is one thing in which Islam will not temporize or compromise, it is the absolute unity of God.[21] There is no deity but Allah. This is the bedrock of Islam. In the whole of the universe there is absolutely no being worthy to be worshipped other than Allah, that only to him heads should bow in submission and adoration. He is the only being possessing all powers, that all are in need of his favours, and that all are obliged to solicit his help. He is concealed from our senses, and our intellect fails to perceive what he is. It is very difficult to perceive what he is It is very difficult to understand the concept of God. It is the faith of some people that God came down to the earth in human form; others think that God after settling the affairs of the universe has retired and is now taking rest, some believe that it is necessary to approach God through the media of saints and spirits, and nothing can be achieved without their intermediation. Some imagine God to have a certain form or image, and they regard it necessary to keep that image before them for the purposes of worship.

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[20] *For further details see John Deven Port, Islam's Contribution to Science and Civilization; Robert Briffault, The making of Humanity; Hamidullah, The Muslim concept of State; Abul Ala Maudoodi, Al Jihad fil Islam; Wensinck, Early Muhammadan Traditions, 168. The Quran proclaims the absolute equality of all Apostles.*

[21] *See Iqbal, Reconstruction in Islam, (Lahore, 1930) (Oxford, 1934) 147–9*

Tawheed is the highest conception of godhead, the knowledge of which God has sent to mankind with which Adam, was sent. It was the same knowledge that had been revealed to Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus. It was this very knowledge which Prophet Muhammad brought to mankind. Tawheed dispels all the clouds of ignorance and illumines the horizon with the light of reality. Allah is the creator of this universe. He is the creator, a designer, a controller, a Governor of this universe. He is infinite and eternal. He is powerful, wise, omnipotent and omniscient. He possesses limitless powers. According to Islamic concept of God all these divine attributes and powers vest in One Being. There can not be more than one creator of this universe. Everything in the universe is created, controlled and regulated. It depends upon others. It is mortal and transitory. Our slightest movements are controlled by an inexorable law and it can not deviate from that law. There is a divine power who controls the whole universe... the human being, the sun, the stars, the moon etc. *Tawheed* means there is no human and material object which possess the divine power and authority deserving worship and obedience.

It can, therefore, be said that divinity does not vest in any material or human element of universe. There is a Supreme Being over and above all that our unwary eyes see in the universe, who possesses the divine attributes, who is the will behind all phenomena, the creator of this grand universe. He is Allah, the Lord of the Universe and has none as associate in His divinity.[22]

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[22] *For further details see Collin Wilson, Modern Life, (11th impression, 1957, London); C. E. M. Joad, The present and Future of Religion; Phillip K. Hitti, History of Arabs, (1950) p 129.*

Belief in God's Angels :- To have faith in God's angels is the second article of Islamic faith. Prophet Muhammad has informed us that the imperceptible spiritual beings, whom people believe to be deities or gods or God's children are really His angels. They have no share in God's divinity. They are under His command, and are so obedient that they can not deviate from His commands even to the extent of the slightest fraction of an inch. They have no authority to do anything of their own accord. They are free from sin. They are unable to disobey God. These angels of God surround us from all sides; are attached to us, and are always in our company.

Faith in the Books of God :- This is the third article of faith. According to Prophet Muhammad this is the duty of Muslims to have faith in the books of God. God sent these books to mankind. God had revealed his books to his prophets before Muhammad and these books were sent down in the same way as He sent down the Quran to Prophet Muhammad. We have been informed of the names of some of these Books, viz. books of Abraham, the Torah of Moses; Zaboor (Psalms) of David and Injeel (Gospel) of Jesus Christ. We have been commanded to believe in previous revealed books only in the sense to admit that before the Quran also, God has sent down books through His prophets, that they were all from one and the same God, the same God who sent the Quran. The Quran is the last of divine books sent down by God. It is the faith of Muslims that Quran is purely and absolutely God's own word. It is pefectly true, that every word of it is preserved. That every thing mentioned therein is right. It is the bounden duty of man to carry out in his life each and every command of it.

Belief in life after death :- The fifth article of Islamic faith is belief in life after death. Prophet Muhammad has directed us to believe in resurrection after death and in the day of Judgment. According to Islamic belief, the life of this world and all of that in it, will come to an end on one appointed day. Everything will be annihilated. That day is called

Qayamah i. e. the last day. That all the human beings who had lived in the world since its inception will then be restored to life and will be presented to God who will sit in court on that day. That the entire record of every man and woman—a complete record of their doings and misdoings will be presented before God for final judgment. The God shall finally adjudge the reward of every person. Those who emerge successful in this judgment, will go to paradise and the doors of eternal bliss will be opened upon them. Those who are condemned and deserve punishment will be sent to hell.

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Morality and Mysticism

Morality and Mysticism are very closely related. Unless there is moral progress, we cannot have the vision of God; and unless we have the vision of God, moral life cannot be complete. This is veritably aparadox of mysticism. The mystical view-point is higher than the mere moral viewpoint. In fact, whatever is conducive to spiritual life is alone moral. All morality is convential. Bhakti alone is un-covential.

Shri Gurudev Ranade
(Vachanamruta)

Zen As A Way of Life

Swami Nirmalananda *

" Zen is the most precious possession of Asia. With its beginning in India, development in China and final practical application in Japan, it is today the strongest power in the world. It is a world-power, for in so far as men live at all, they live by Zen. Where there is poetical action, religious aspiration, a heroic thought, a union of Nature within a man and Nature without, there is Zen." So wrote the late Dr. R. H. Blyth, an authority and a famous exponent of Zen.

While Lord Buddha, the Blessed and the World-honoured One, was staying on Mt. Gṛdhrakuta, just before he began his sermon, a certain Dharmaraja reverentially offered a flower to the Master. Buddha, holding the flower in his hand and looking at it in silence, smiled. Seeing the smile on Buddha's face, Maha Kasyapa, one of his disciples sitting among the audience, also smiled. That was the beginning of Zen, the first transmission of Enlightenment without words. A unique parallel of this way of looking is Christ's asking us to look at the flowers of the field. Yet we never care to look at anything with a mind uncluttered with all sorts of thoughts, let alone a flower. Truly speaking, the spirit of Zen is ' beyond words and scriptures ' and, therefore, it has nothing to do with any particular religion.

Bodhidharma the first Zen Patriarch was the son of a Raja of Kancheepuram in South India. He took Zen to China in the sixth century A. D. and it was carried farther to Japan in the twelfth century. Zen has been described as ' A special teaching without Scriptures, beyond words and letters, pointing to the Mind-essence of man, seeing directly into one's nature and attaining Enlightenment.' 'Zen' in Japanese is a derivation from Ch'an in Chinese. Ch'an came from *Dhyan* (meditation) in Sanskrit. Really speaking, Zen is not a sect, but an experience, a state of being which one is able to live through when placed in a responsive relationship with the Universe. True meditation is not only a self-search, but also the finding of the Truth and abiding in it. It is the thought-free state of awareness. During this emptying process of the mind, thoughts, memories and speculations cease. The Supreme Grace descends and our heart and mind are filled with immeasurable peace and happiness. It is this state of death of the mind which then becomes the mindless Mind or the Zero-point of Life that makes life and death of man wonderful and meaningful. When the mind experiences 'Emptiness' as the true nature of all things, we then attain Wisdom, we 'know ourselves' and we have that 'absolute and non-intellectual understanding.' Wisdom is knowledge of our ignorance. Deliverance, according to Zen, is freedom from the illusion that we are not free. The illusion is *to think* that there is illusion.

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* *The author has lived in Zen Monastaries of Japan.*

It has been said: 'If you have Zen in your life, you will have no fear, no doubt, no unnecessary craving, no extreme emotion. Illogical attitudes and egoistical actions will not trouble you. You will serve humanity humbly fulfilling your life with loving-kindness and compassion and observing your own passing away as a petal falling from a flower. With Zen in life you are serene and you enjoy life in blissful tranquillity. With the understanding of Zen, the restless mind becomes calm, the narrow-minded becomes broad-minded and the unhappy becomes happy.

A life of Zen, as the name itself denotes, is centred in meditation. Life itself becomes a movement in meditation. The performance of every action, when inspired by constant meditation, has an ennobling and purifying effect on the individual. In this sort of spontaneous living, there is joy and freedom and it has a sacramental value. On the other hand, any pre-meditated action by a calculating and scheming mind has a binding and crippling effect on man.

Zen has no God to be worshipped, no rituals and ceremonies to be performed, no heaven or hell to go to after death, no gods to be appeased and no intermediary between God and man. Zen is the poetry of life and a life in Zen becomes the living poem. Zen is the music of life and when one has Zen, he is able to live with a song of joy in his heart. Zen's contribution for the promotion of the art and culture of Japan has been great. With Zen in life, one becomes an artist of life and, therefore, he knows the art of living. Zen has a sense of humour and it expresses itself by smiling at the paradoxes of life and by laughing at the stupidities of men. The distinctive Japanese mind is particularly good at it. Look at these sayings : ' The desire for Enlightenment is also an illusion '; ' The flourishing will decline; Those who meet must part '; ' Renouncing the world, but not renouncing the self '. ' The worldly passion is the dog of the house. It does not go away though you beat it; Enlightenment is the deer of the mountain. It does not come though you invite it. '

Even before the starting of Zen meditation, the most important thing is to be quiet and to sit at ease. Taking everything easy, it is necessary to relax, to reflect and to let go of everything. In this manner of sitting relaxed both within and without in a contemplative mood, our mind and the world around us become peaceful and tranquil. What Zen does is to break down our usual pattern of thinking and to arrive at complete cessation of thoughts, ' Emptiness of the mind ', otherwise known as the Void or the Buddha-mind. In pure observation, gentle reflection and profound feeling of everything which we see both within and without–various thoughts coming and going, life and its recurring problems, the heart-breaking brutalities going on everywhere in society, the sad plight of the world and humanity, the extraordinary beauty of Nature or of a particular object in Nature, the mystery of this vast and wonderful Universe–there arises a strange feeling and a profound state of compassion in the heart. In this state of pure feeling and loving compassion, thoughts melt in love, thinking of the mind gets merged in the feeling of the heart. If anything, Zen requires that our respect for and reliance on thoughts be reduced and finally destroyed.

Zen meditation is not for getting anything new, but to throw away all we have in the mind, to throw away even the idea that we are throwing away. Zen is unhindered freedom, flowering in love, loving the Universe and being loved by it. It is the life-death feeling, the activity of inaction and the realizing of the universality of Truth. Instead of choosing ' this ' and rejecting ' that ', clinging to one and hating another, we should remain quiet and live in all simplicity in that undifferentiated state where subject and object are non-distinguishable. When we are thus able to be free from doubt and confusion, we become simple and natural in mind and heart. Because of Zen's constant emphasis on 'Emptiness' which is the true universal nature of all things and which Buddha had preached so eloquently, we are asked to be like empty space-detached, disinterested and indifferent. Let everything take its natural course without our interference. Echoing the Taoist mode of expression, a Zen Master says: ' Remove selfishness and self-assertion from yourself. Then the world will be properly governed. Cut out your cleverness and discard your knowledge, then the world will benefit a hundred-fold. ' We should not trouble our mind with various affairs that take place around us all the time. It is quite easy to get involved and entangled in them. We should learn to remain unmoved in mind, no matter what goes on around us. Again and again, we are asked to learn from 'Pure Emptiness' and even if we stray away from that natural state, we are urged to return to that pure simplicity, to that sure ease and detachment. When asked to give something positive or any affirmations of life, a Zen Master says: ' Without zero no mathematics, without black no white, without emptiness no fullness, without darkness no light, without woman no man and so on. Unless the Universe is empty, nothing can move in it, unless the room is empty, no one can live in it, unless the pipe is empty, no wator will flow through it and so on. '

Speaking about, detachment, another Zen Master says:
' Be detached, be detached and be ever detached,
Even when you think that further detachment
is not possible,
Be still more detached and detached remain ever more.'

Everything has a place in the scheme of the Universe. Therefore, the natural order of things should not be tampered with. One should not interfere with the minds of others. A Zen Master says: ' People limp about in pursuit of cleverness (knowledge) striving with each other in their desire for gain to which there is no end. When people forget nature and are concerned only with knowledge, they are full of doubts and confusion. With their notions of right and wrong, good and bad, they continually throw the world into confusion by distorting the nature of things. They thus run about and exhaust themselves in these pursuits. ' Says another Zen Master: ' See the absolute essence of the mind. With intensity and attention watch the flow of life in which there is no will. When there is no resistance or escape, when there is total absence of the will, there is joy, beauty and freedom. Life, therefore, should be lived to its fullness at each moment in tune with the rapid rhythm of life. '

According to Zen there is one monster to be dealt with and to be overcome. This is the dualistic notion of the mind: triumph and failure, gain and loss, good and bad, which keep one divided as a fragmented being. It is for this reason that Zen has scant respect for discriminative knowledge. It wants man to rise above duality to attain the non-discriminative Wisdom in which there is unity, harmony, peace and tranquillity. Zen is not a system of thought or philosophy. *It is a way of looking at life.* Our bondage, when it is seen by the Enlightened Mind turns out to be our freedom. Buddha says: ' *Samsara* is *Nirvana.* ' Zen is more psychological than philosophical. Above all, what makes Zen so unique and distinguishing is its directness and simplicity. Zen would say: Be as simple as a child and look at the world through a baby's mind. Zen Masters, by their own life and behaviour, teach their disciples to be simple, natural and direct instead of their drifting away from Truth by various thoughts, even the thoughts of Truth itself. A certain Zen Master stopped teaching his monks but asked them to meditate instead. When asked why he stopped his sermons, his reply was: 'I am nothing, I know nothing and, therefore, I teach nothing, for there is absolutely nothing'

To Zen the spoken words are nothing but a sound in the air, the written and printed words are only some scratches on paper and thoughts are only a noise created in the mind. Says a Zen Master: 'If you utter the name of Buddha, wash your mouth twice.' So Zen does not want us to waste our time and energy in unnecessary discussion and argument. A Zen Master says: 'The sun and the moon carry out their functions without wasting time on thoughts, arguments, debates and discussions. Why don't we learn this lesson from them?' What Zen values most is Buddha's Noble Silence and his Serene Smile. The former puts us in complete harmony with all things and beings and the latter teaches that man's ultimate goal is Happiness. It is significant that Zen started with a smile. The Indian mind expresses its love, appreciation, even wisdom or blessing by a smile. Zen is iconoclastic. There is a beautiful saying in Zen:

> 'Stone Buddhas break into pieces,
> Metal Buddhas melt in the furnace,
> Clay Buddhas dissolve in the water,
> Wooden Buddhas become ashes in the fire,
> True Buddha alone lives for ever.'

There is an interesting story of a Zen Master, Tanhsia (738–824). One day when he was staying at Yerinji Temple, it was so cold that he took out one of the three wooden Buddhas and burnt it to make fire to warm himself. The monk-in-charge burst out: 'What do you mean by burning my Buddha?' Tanhsia poked about in the ashes with his stick and began to search. When asked what he was searching for, he replied: 'I am looking for the 'Asti' (relic) of Buddha.' When the monk said, 'How would a wooden Buddha have any

'Asti'?. Tanhsia's retort was : 'If so, why don't you give me the other two Buddhas to make fire?'

Certain Zen anecdotes are famous : The Chinese Zen Master, Sengtsan when he was a monk, asked his teacher, Huike: ' I have no peace of mind. I implore you to give me peace. ' Huike said : ' Show me your mind. I shall grant you peace. ' Sengtsan thought for a while and then said: ' I have been searching for it, but cannot find it. Huike's immediate reply was: ' Then I have already given you peace. ' One day Taohsin came and bowed to Sengtsan and said : ' Master, I want liberation. ' Sengtsan asked back: ' Who is binding you ? ' ' No one ' he replied. ' Then why do you ask for liberation ? ' At once Taohsin came to a profound realisation.

Even though the reading of books on Zen may be useful for a theoretical understanding of it, without the 'Awakening' by Zen experience, a care-free and thought-free life in freedom and happiness becomes almost impossible. It is this profound experience that puts an end to one's search and keeps the mind at rest. Without it, the mind will be striving and restless by thinking, imagining and speculating about Truth. Such restlessness caused by mental activities has no place in Zen. Even if studies and reflections are helpful for the intellectual grasp of Zen, the experiencing of Truth is quite a different thing. Words are only like the finger pointing to the moon and if one looks only to the finger, he will not be able to see the moon. Zen says clearly: ' The mind should have nothing to grasp and no one to grasp. There should be nothing in the mind and no mind in things. Even if you meet Buddha and the Patriarchs in meditation, kill them outright.' One Zen Master says it beautifully: ' When the mind is nowhere, God is every where. ' Zen Masters often put puzzling questions to their disciples in order to test them. One such is: ' Everything exists in space. But where does space exist ? '

Many centuries ago Buddha spoke of ' Emptiness ' the essential nature of all things, as modern science proves it.

Things are not what they seem to be. All is nothing but energy, Divine Energy. As any thoughtful person will agree, life, as Buddha said long ago, is *Dukka* (suffering), as we see everywhere with our own eyes, and transient, in a flux, as science confirms it. As a skilful physician prescribing the medicine for a disease, he also prescribed the sovereign remedy for the disease of life, for the disease of the mind that causes untold suffering to countless millions of beings all over the world. Unless the mental apparatus is put in its proper gear, one will not be able to find his perfect peace and happiness. Without Enlightenment, a sensible and intelligent way of living is quite impossible. According to Buddha, compassion is the cream of religion, loving compassion for the erring multitude, unlimited compassion for all living beings. Says he ; ' Absolute Wisdom is absolute compassion ' Without this healing touch of our loving compassion for one and all, even if we make the whole world flowing with milk and honey, wide-spread misery and suffering in one form or the other will prevail on earth as ever before.

Buddha's words still echo in our ears and minds with a ring of sparkling freshness. They have not faded with the long passage of time : ' Light your own lamp ', ' Be a light unto yourself ', ' Truth is everywhere except for the blind ', ' Anyone who knows the Truth, knows my doctrine, ' ' Even if one conquers thousands of men in thousands of battles, he who conquers himself is the greatest conqueror ', ' Heedfulness is the way to life, heedlessness is the way to death. The heedful never die, but the heedless are dead already, though living. '

When the mystic-poet asks us ' To see heaven in a wild flower/And Universe in a grain of sand ', what he really tells us is to see that the essential nature of a wild flower, a grain of sand, heaven and the Universe is one and the same. It is the true knowing or seeing that the whole is in the part and that the part is in the whole, or in Buddha's words : '.Form in Emptiness and Emptiness in Form'. Only by not standing apart from the whole by arrogating oneself as being above everything else and judging things with thoughts, the essential nature of everything can be realized. Then one sees oneself as not different from the Universe and the Universe not different from one self, as All is One and One is All. We are all made of the same stuff and are tarred with the same brush. With a sip of the tea in the cup, we know the taste of the tea in the whole cup. A drop of the ocean is enough to know the taste of the whole ocean. As Zen Master, Hakuin says ' One mouthful of Reality relieves an eternal hunger. '

There are many simple Zen stories that drive home the point succinctly and beautifully. A few of them are given below :

Nan-in, a Japanese Master during the Meiji era (1868-1912) received a university professor who came to enquire about Zen. Nan-in served tea. He poured his visitor's cup ful and then kept on pouring. The professor watched the overflow until he could no longer restrain himself : 'It is overfull. No more will go in', said the professor. 'Like this cup', Nan-in said, 'you are full of your own opinions and speculations. How can I show you Zen unless you first empty your cup. Only an empty cup can be filled, not a full cup.'

Zen Master, Hakuin was praised by his neighbours as one living a pure life. The parents of a beautiful Japanese girl who owned a food store near Hakuin's place suddenly found that their daughter was pregnant. She would not confess who the man was; but after much harassment she named Hakuin. In great anger the parents went to the Master. 'Is that so?' was all he would say. 'After the child was born, it was brought to Hakuin. By this time he had lost his reputation and this did not trouble him either. He took very good care of the child. He obtained milk from his neighbours and everything else the little one needed. A year later, the girl-mother could stand it no longer. She told her parents the truth-that the real father of the child was a young man who worked in the market. The mother and father of the girl at once went to

Hakuin to ask his forgiveness, to apologize and to get back the child. Hakuin was willing, but while giving back the child, all he said was : 'Is that so ?'

Tanzan and Ekido were once travelling together down a muddy road. Heavy rain was still falling. Coming round a bend, they met a lovely girl in silk Kimono and sash, unable to cross the intersection. 'Come on, girl', said Tanzan at once. Lifting her in his arms, he carried her over the mud. Ekido did not speak until that night when they reached a lodging Temple. Then he no longer could restrain himself. 'We monks do not go near females, especially not such young and lovely ones. Why did you do that?' 'I left the girl there. But are you still carrying her in your mind?' Tanzan asked.

Shoichi was a one-eyed teacher of Zen, sparkling with Enlightenment. He taught his disciples in Tofuku Temple. Day and night the whole Temple remained in silence. There was no sound at all. Even the reciting of *Sutras* was abolished by the Master. His pupils had nothing to do but meditate in silence. Then one day the neighbours heard the ringing of the bell and the recitation of *Sutras*. Then they knew that Shoichi has gone.

Zen is freedom. The free want others to be free.
Zen is happiness. Let the happy make others happy.

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Gurudeo Ranade & Lokamanya Tilak

Prof. : **P. G. Pataskar** M. Sc.

Our beloved motherland has created many gems–the personalities of spiritual heights, unstinted patriotism and deep scholarship. Hence she is aptly described as " नररत्न प्रसवा " or " वहुरत्ना वसुंधरा ".

The Saints and Sages, born in this country, have guided the masses to the way of emancipation (मोक्ष) and lit the lamps of satisfaction in their tiny and miserable lives. The patriots with their dauntless courage and full devotion have liberated our nation from the clutches of slavary and shown us the dawn of independence.

When a number of such towering personalities lived contemporarily, the common man becomes curious to know about their inter-relationships and also interactions and whether such personalities living in the same period were having congenial relations or hostile to each other. It is always interesting and instructive to go through the biographies of such great persons as it widens the horizon of our vision and makes our mind full of courageous thoughts and shows us the eternal path : " Our way should be guided by distant pole star and not by street light, " says Dr. S. Radhakrishnan.

With this noble intention, it is my humble attempt to give a profile of two such worth remembering (प्रातःस्मरणीय) personalities who lived in our country and had profound influence on the struggle of independence of our nation and also in the enlightenment of the spiritual path.

One of these personalities is Shri Gurudeo Dr. R. D. Ranade, the celebrated saint of Nimbal. Nimbal is a small railway station which is about 40 miles away from Solapur. It has become a place of pilgrimage due to the stay of Shri Gurudeo Ranade in this place for quite a long period. He has changed this centre to work from Infinite centres and illumine the Infinite circumference with the Infinite Light Divine.

The second personality is the great hero of struggle of independence, Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak. (hereinafter referred to as Lokamanya). He had shaken the throne of British Empire by his dauntless slogan "Swarajya is my birthright and I shall have it."

Gurudeo Ranade was already well-known for his authority in spiritual realm and his progress on the path of "नामस्मरण" (Namasmarana) from his early days. His name and fame spread throughout India and abroad due to his distinguished treatises viz : "Carlyle's Signs of the Times and Characteristics," (1916) and "A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy (1926)."

Gurudeo Ranade came in contact with Lokamanya in the last two decades of his (Lokamanya's) life. The greatness of Lokamanya needs no special emphasis. He had a versatile personality. His politics was based on the principles of thorough dedication, religion and ethics. At the same time, he was a distinguished scholar in Astrology, Mathematics, Indology and especially philosophy and as well had great mastery of the Vedic and Upanishadic literature. In a nut-shell, we can describe him as an Encyclopaedia of Oriental Philosophy, (भारतीय तत्वज्ञान). His "Geetarahasya", written in the Mandale jail, is a climax of his scholarship.

Lokamanya was always alert to encourage the youth to participate in the struggle of Independence. His prophetic vision was searching the studious youth, who would continue and advocate his politics. It can therefore be understood that

Lokamanya came in contact with Shri Gurudeo when he was about 20 years old.

The glimpses of the relations of Lokamanya and Gurudeo Ranade have been produced here in the words of Shri Gurudeo himself (Ref :- Gurudeo R. D. Ranade - Charitra Ani Tatwajnan-by , S. G. Tulpule 1958, Venus Prakashan, Pune) Gurudeo says " I had first noticed the scholarship and talent of Lokamanya in 1906, when I was studying in Deccan College in B. A. class. Afterwards, I had met Lokamanya along with some of my friends when he was released from Mandale jail. Lokamanya had shown to me at that time the manuscript copy of "Geetarahasya." When the treatise was published, Shri Narsimha Chintaman alias Tatyasaheb Kelkar (Editor of 'Kesari' Marathi-periodical newspaper) asked me to write a few articles on "Geetarahasya," which he promised to publish in "Kesari " I had gone through "Geetarahasya" within eight days from its publication. But it was wise on my part that I did not agree to do so. I must confess that even though I was working as a professor in philosophy for about two years, my talent was not mature enough at that time to give opinion on the great work of Lokamanya."

When Gurudeo had gone to see Lokamanya in 1916 when his book Geetarahasya was published, he was asked by Lokamanya "what speciality of Geetarahasya " striked you most? Upon which Gurudeo answered, "The speciality in Geetarahasya lies in profuse and illuminating references to stories and episodes in Mahabharat and political thoughts which illustrate the topics at many places." Further he added "It is quite possible to write again the comparative volume like Geetarahasya; but it would not be possible for anybody to narrate the close inter-relations and knowledge of Mahabharat which is seen everywhere in this volume."

Another peculiarity in Geetarahasya is, that it has coined the terminology of Philosophy and given the proforma of thorough discussions on philosophical problems in Marathi and this is a boon to Marathi language and linguistics. Lokamanya agreed and accepted both the aspects, as correct.

Gurudeo met Lokamanya in 1917.Earlier, he (Lokamanya) had expressed his desire with two of Gurudeo's friends that he should enter politics. Shri Gurudeo approached him in this context. Lokamanya questioned Gurudeo at that time "Are you prapared to take part in politics ?" In reply, Shri Gurudeo said, " I have already accepted the life membership of Deccan Education Society, since three years. There is no proper reason to leave the Society. Besides, I have more liking for religion and spiritual life rather than politics. So it will be better on my part if I make more efforts in the field of religion. As per your honourable views a man must attain stable talent (स्थित प्रज्ञ) before he enters politics. So, one should make sure whether he has attained that state of "स्थित प्रज्ञा", before deciding to join politics.

Lokamanya smiled after this discussion and said "Arovindbabu (Yogi Aravindo) is also a mystic like you."

Afterwards, when Lokamanya noticed my inclination towards study of Religion and Philosophy he said " I shall raise a fund of one lakh rupees and hand it over to the Bombay University and recommend your name as professor of Hindu religion." I replied "you may hand over the amount to the University. But as there are many complications in the University administration, I am not sure whether I would get the appointment as professor of Hindu religion."

After this episode, this particular topic was not discussed. Once I had met Lokamanya in Sardargriha (Bombay) at about 9-30 p.m.; he discussed with me the topic of English translation of Geetarahasya. I gave the opinion that it will be very difficult to translate Geetarahasya in English. But it's adoptation in English will be better.Lokamanya accepted my opinion and said, "it must be adopted in English. Such adoptation should also contain recent principles and philosophical criterion which are not included in Geetarahasya.

After this discussion, Lokamanya asked "Do you think I am an atheist?" Upon which, I answered "it will be audacious.

to call a person an atheist, who is having such a unique, profound and unshaking faith in Bhagawadgita."

These instances and discussions make it clear how both Gurudeo and Lokamanya were aware of the dignity of each other and were holding each other, in high esteem.

According to principles of Sant Ramdas :-

सामर्थ्य आहे चळवळीचे
जो जो करील तयाचे
परंतु तेथे पाहिजे
अधिष्ठान धर्माचे

Lokamanya had tried his level best to persuade the learned, talented persons having spiritual background like Gurudeo and others to enter politics. But Gurudeo was also aware of his propensities; hence he intentionally avoided to join politics. Due to this basic difference in outlook, these two personalities could not work together in one and the same field. I dare say that reluctance towards the politics on the part of Gurudeo was a loss to the politics of freedom fighters during the preindependence period.

In conclusion, one can say that such personalities with reason and rationalism and faith in God were very keen to appreciate the grandeur, scholarship and merit of each other. Therefore, their work and teaching have remained universal and everlasting.

An American Professor, George Birch says "It is customary when a man dies, to publish eulogies of him, which written under stress of the occasion, are often uncritical and exaggerated. It may be better to wait a year or two. If he still seems great in retrospect, his life can be appraised in a more objective spirit. R. D. Ranade is a man, whose stature, in my estimate, has only grown in retrospect." The same is also true in the case of Lokamanya Tilak.

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Report for the quarter ending 31-12-1984

Dr. Sri. Prakash Dubey, M. A. Ph. D. Sr. Reader, Department of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Philosophy, Rani Durgavati University, Jabalpur delivered 'Gurudeo Ranade Memorial Lectures' for 4 days from 13-10-1984. His Subject of Lectures was "Hinduism & Christianity." The lectures were instructive and enlightening. The audience was appreciable.

As usual, the Vaikunthachaturdashi Name-Saptah was celebrated in the Mandir for 5 days from 2-11-1984. A good number of Sadhakas attended the Saptah.

Shri. M. V. Mantri, Ganesh-khind Pune, paid Rs. 500/- and became donor.

Dr. R. V. Deshpande, M. D. Goregaon, Bombay, paid Rs. 305/- and enrolled himself as Life-Member.

Shri. A. N. Deshpande, B. E. Hindwadi, paid Rs. 100/- and is enrolled as life-subscriber.